



The Florida House of Representatives

Office of the Speaker

Dean Cannon
Speaker

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Digital Learning Now Act Passes Florida House

Tallahassee, Fla. – CS/CS/HB 7197, the Digital Learning Now Act, today passed the Florida House of Representatives. The Digital Learning Now Act expands school choice by increasing digital learning options for students.

“I applaud Representative Stargel for sponsoring this legislation that expands school choice through digital learning and gives parents and students more educational options,” said House Speaker Dean Cannon (R-Winter Park). “In addition to expanding school choice, this legislation exposes students to online learning which is paramount to ensuring Florida’s children are well-prepared for a career in the digital age.”

CS/CS/HB 7197 provides guidance to school districts and the Department of Education (DOE) to expand digital learning options. It also institutes that by the 2011-2012 school year, all students entering 9th grade must complete at least one course through online learning as part of the graduation requirement. Additionally, the legislation institutes that by 2014-2015, all statewide end-of-course assessments be administered online.

“School choice is an important tool that empowers parents to make decisions that will impact their children’s educational future,” said Representative Bill Proctor (R-St. Augustine) chair of the House Education Committee. “Digital learning is a vital component of school choice that will allow parents to tailor their children’s education to a plan that gives them the best opportunity for success.”

CS/CS/HB 7197 also serves to expand digital learning to charter schools by allowing them to offer blended learning courses to full-time students who receive online instruction and authorizes

full-time virtual instruction through a virtual charter school. Finally, this bill directs DOE to identify the best strategies and methods to assist school districts in implementing virtual education programs.

“By expanding digital learning in our state’s school system, the legislature is taking the necessary steps to guarantee that our students are prepared for a rapidly changing global economy,” said Representative Kelli Stargel (R-Lakeland), sponsor of CS/CS/HB 7197. “This legislation will put Florida at the forefront of both technological advancement in education and the empowerment of parents to make critical decisions about their children’s future.”

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